## What is socialism?

***Debate in New Democratic Youth***

(from *Identity*, published by the Quebec New Democratic Youth)

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1965-06Jun15-25a (conclusion) For further copies contact:

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# INTRODUCTION

The three articles presented here were originally published in IDENTITY, an internal discussion magazine published by the Quebec Federation of New Democratic Students.

The Left Caucus Convention Call appeared in the Mid-June 1965 issue of Identity, and was distributed separately to Young New Democrats across Canada. It was intended as a call to socialist forces in the New Democratic Youth to join to form a Federal Left Caucus for the Federal NDY Convention which was held in Toronto in July.

In the next edition of Identity, two articles debating the Call were published. The first, by Wilf Day, then a member of the NDY Federal executive, was a critique of the Call. The second, an answer to Mr. Day's criticisms, was by Brian Slocock, a member of the Left Caucus, and of the Quebec NDY executive.

At the convention itself, the Federal Left Caucus was a major force, encompassing NDY'ers from across the country. The caucus presented a full slate of candidates for the 8 member executive, winning 4 posts, and coming within a few votes of winning the others.

Since the Convention, the debate between socialists and proponents of the 'new left' has continued in the NDY. Because these articles initiated the discussion, because they clearly present both viewpoints, and because the editions of Identity are out of print, we are reprinting them here.

# LEFT CAUCUS CONVENTION CALL

FELLOW NDYers:

More and more it is becoming clear that the New Democratic Youth if it is to play the role it must play in Canadian youth politics, must adopt a socialist program, and elect a leadership which is pledged to carry out the program.

World events make this clear. The people of the colonial world - in Vietnam, in the Dominican Republic, in the Congo - are rebelling against neo-colonialism, and all that it entails - poverty, exploitation, dictatorship. The Negro freedom struggle is essentially confronting the capitalist system, and the people taking part in this struggle are becoming more aware of this. Social equality without economic and educational equality is meaningless.

Canadian youth are rapidly realizing that struggles taking place in the colonial world affect them directly. The explosive growth of SNCC in Canada, the wave of demonstrations protesting U.S. policy in South Vietnam show this clearly. But beyond picketing, what perspective is there for these radical youth? Where is the youth movement that supports their views and actions? Where is the youth movement that points out the necessity of CHANGING THE SYSTEM?

THESE RADICAL YOUTH NEED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP!!

# what is socialism?

## THE DEBATE IN THE NEW DEMOCRATIC YOUTH

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THESE RADICAL YOUTH NEED <u>POLITICAL LEADERSHIP</u>!!

Working youth are the hardest hit by increasing automation in this country. They are the least experienced. They are "last hired, first fired!" They are notoriously underpaid. Unemployment among the youth is consistently higher than among other comparable groupings within the economy. The capitalist system is incapable of dealing with automation and its result, increasing unemployment, without recourse to dehumanizing charity. Clearly, THE SYSTEM MUST BE CHANGED! Only under socialism, where production is for use, not for profit, can these problems be solved. But where is the youth movement that points this out, that presents a serious, comprehensive alternative to the present system?

WORKING YOUTH NEED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP!

Canadian universities remain the reserve of the wealthy. For every student at a Canadian university, there is another, equally qualified youth who is unable to attend for financial reasons. University education is entirely inadequate to equip students for working life. The university has become a machine, designed and run by the power structure, to turn out conforming yes-men, who fit nicely behind oak desks in huge corporations. Every attempt is made to stifle discussion, and to prevent students from having a say in the way the university is run. Many students are demanding that THE SYSTEM BE CHANGED. They are demanding that the university be run by the people most affected by it - the students. But where is the mass youth movement that can, or is willing to, rally support for their demands?

UNIVERSITY YOUTH NEED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP!

High school students across the country are on the move. They are demanding more freedom within their schools. They are demanding the right to form political clubs in their high schools. They are demanding the right to be consulted about the

way their schools are run. They are demanding full student control in the area of student activities. But where is the youth movement that supports their demands? Where is the movement that will do everything in its power to CHANGE THE SYSTEM?

## HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH NEED POLITICAL LEADERSHIP!

Students themselves cannot change society. They must align themselves with the Canadian working people. Only the New Democratic Youth, as the youth of the Canadian labour party, has the organizational ability to link Canadian youth and the labour movement. Only the NDY can lead the youth of Canada towards political power - towards a socialist Canada.

However, the present program of the NDP-NDY is one of hopelessly inadequate reformism. It does not call for a fundamental change in the system. As a result, many youth turn away from the NDY, seeing it as no more than another political party youth group that supports the established order. The coming federal convention of the NDY must adopt a program that calls for socialism.

The present leadership of the NDY sees the NDY as a breeding ground for future parliamentarians, and as an election machine to be kept dormant until election time. While the training of future leaders, and the fighting of elections are vital, it is clear that this is not enough. What is needed is a leadership with a perspective of building a mass socialist youth movement, a youth movement that will participate in the day-to-day struggles of Canadian youth, a youth movement that will lead the struggle for human rights, for an end to external intervention in such countries as Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, for support to the colonial peoples in their efforts to control their own political and economic destinies.

The new leadership must be capable of overcoming the present alienation between the members and the executive. They must consult with, and listen to, the members, and encourage the exchange of ideas, through the publication of a paper of free opinion open to all members, and through regular regional seminars, where the new leadership will expose themselves to the comments and criticisms of the members. They must attempt to educate, to lead, and to raise the social consciousness of the membership. They must not be afraid to stimulate, to challenge, the membership.

The new leadership must be prepared to lead Canadian youth. A public paper directed at youth must be created to raise the issues of, and to be a rallying call for, the growing tide of disillusioned youth.

The new leadership must be active and dynamic. They must be prepared to act constantly with their members.

THE PRESENT LEADERSHIP MUST BE REPLACED!
THE NEW DEMOCRATIC YOUTH NEEDS A SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP!

The Federal Left Caucus of the NDY has been formed to present, within the NDY, an alternative to the present program and leadership.

The NDY must demand Canada's immediate withdrawal from all military alliances (NATO, NORAD, etc.) and oppose Canada's entry into the OAS. Canada must withdraw all troops she has stationed in foreign countries, and exclude foreign troops from Canadian soil.

We must demand that Canada give the fullest economic and moral support to the world's newly free countries. We must give support to movements in the still-colonial nations who are struggling for control of their own destinies.

Recognizing that Canada consists of two nations, we must recognize and support the right of the French-Canadian nation to self-determination, and affirm our belief in the principle of equality of nations.

We must demand that the educational system be reorganized so that students and faculty will be fully represented on all governing bodies.We must demand that, since being a student is a full time job, students be paid an adequate living wage.

The New Democratic Youth must demand that basic and Key sectors of the economy be nationalized immediately (eg. steel, transportation and communications, financial institutions) and that the conditions for the common ownership of the means of production be established. Management of nationalized industries must be placed in the hands of the producers themselves, through their own organizations (the trade unions), with a long range view t developing full workers' control of the economy.

These are the key demands of the Federal Left Caucus of the NDY.

We call on all members of the NDY who wish to build the NDY into a dynamic mass socialist youth movement to join with us in the formation of a Left Caucus for the Federal NDY convention,to present a serious political alternative to the present program and to the present leadership. We must elect a leadership pledged to carry out a vigorous program of education and action, both within the NDY and outside it.

<u>WE MUST ADOPT A SOCIALIST PROGRAM</u>!
<u>WE MUST ELECT A SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP</u>!

Left Caucus Convention Call signed by:

Quebec:

William J. Lenihan, Member-at-large, Federal NDY Executive; Member of the Quebec NDP Executive; Member of the Federal NDP Council

Marcel Lalonde, President, Quebec NDY, for the Provincial Council

Ontario:

Dierdre Gallagher, Member-at-large, Ontario NDY Executive

Gary Porter, President, Ottawa City NDY club

Lyle Severin, Chairman, Left Caucus of Ontario NDY, President, Davenport NDY club

British Columbia:

Diane Courneyeur, Secretary, E Winch NDY club

Bruce Elphinstone, President, Richmond Young Democrats

Officially Endorsed by the Quebec NDY and the Left Caucus of the Ontario NDY.

# COMMENTS ON THE LEFT CAUCUS CONVENTION CALL

By WILF DAY

It is unfortunate that, at a moment when the Young New Democrats are at a crucialstage of their development, when new projects are neede and new levels of opportunity are opening for young political radicals, a group claiming to speak for the Left should put forward a Call which is defective in many ways.

Many good points are made in the Call.However, it fails in at least five respects to provide an adequate basis for the further development of the movement: it is cliche'd; it imposes artificial solutions rather than being an authentic expression of radicalism; its social analysis is superficial; it is incorrect in its analysis of the failures of the last two years; and it provided no practical basis for action.

First, in spite of its emphasis on the freedom struggle and the student revolution, it persists in empty talk about the capitalist system in an out-of-date manner. The call for mass nationalization simply has no appeal to the new generation. Young people today are not stupid or uninformed about the state of the world, although they lack the detailed knowledge which would permit them to see how they can change the situation.

Hence, they are well aware that, in many countries, most of the economy is owned by the state, but they see that alienation continues, war persists, oppression is not eliminated, and bureaucratic forms of organization stilldominate schools corporations, and government alike, stifling the freedom of young people to develop in their own way. As Brock Chisholm has said, "that freedom which is present in all children, and is known as innocence, has been destroyed of crippled by gods of local moralities, of local justice, of personal salvation, of prejudice and hate and intolerance, - frequently masquerading as love - gods of everything that would destroy freedom to observe and to think and would keep each generation under the control of the old people. the elders, the shamas, and the priests".

Secondly, the basis of the document is not the spontaneous "new left" emerging in North America. Young members of the Canadian Left are beginning a lively search for newdirections and new formulations of the basic principles of democracy. They are doing this in a radical way, going beyond structures and dogmas to examine what underlies the traditional formulations of the Left which seems to have lost their relevance. In spite of the unique feature of fhe Canadian scene, as opposed to the American - the existence of a moderately successful party of the Left and of a militant trade union movement - this questioning goes on, revealing the depth of the discontent with the old answers. The modern manifestations of radical youth mentioned in the Call seem to be grafted on to a conventional socialist program.

This is why I say, thirdly, that its social analysis is shallow. In fact, young people who seek to democratize society will find much more interesting ideas in the articles on oligarchy which preceed the Call, in the last issue of Identity. The Call does not even suggest a radical analysis of the situation of students in the new context

which Marshall McLuhan calls"the global village": a new generation aware of the world as never before, open-minded, yet atomized, barely able to conceive of collective action because they lack group identification. It does not suggest how we can proceed from the present tendency of "phoney radicalism" - attacking injustice somewhere else - to a challenge to the Canadian power structure. It tends to call for more militant resolutions rather than for the conquest of our own environment.

It lacks an ideology flexible and radical enough to apply to new situations. Compare it, for example, to these principles of a radical democracy, a "participatory democracy", put forward in the U.S. by SDS (Students for a Democratic Society):

> "that decision-making of basic socila consequence be carried on by public groupings;
> "that the economic experience is so personally decisive that the individual must share in its full determination;
> "that politics must be seen positively, as the art of collectively creating an acceptable pattern of social relations;
> "that the economy itself is of such social importance that its major resources and means of production should be open to democratic participation and subject to democratic social regulation."

In short, it fails to go back to the basic relationship between freedom and democracy, which underlay traditional socialism and which underlies equally the New Left in its attempt to lead people to solve their own problems by revitalizing democracy.

Perhaps more importantly for us, in the NDY, this Call misunderstands the present problems facing the NDY, and proposes only the most theoretical of solutions. One signer of the Call has admitted that he does not know of even one of the "present leadership" who sees the NDY as "a breed-

ing ground for future parliamentarians, and an election machine to be kept dormant until election time". It is clear that the present leadership acted in good faith. Why, then, have they failed to grasp new opportunities and build a mass youth movement?

~~Although no one~~ could call me a slavish supporter of the top leaders of the NDY, I must rise to their defence against claims that they are not socialists. They are indeed; both the President and the Secretary are well-informed, reliable, second generation socialists. Pedigreed, Iin fact. This is perhaps their greatest difficulty. They, perhaps as mush as the writers of the Left Caucus Call, are out of touch with the new moods of the new generation. Indeed, how could they help but be out of touch while working in professional occupations, at salaries in the area of five and seven thousand sollars, in fixed office locations which hinder them from travelling and keeping in touch with the membership. Living in bourgeois, family surroundings,they are not likely to be continually reminded ofthe environment - the frequently hostile, alien environment - of students and unmarried working youth. They don't even read the same newspapers and magazines.

It is not a failure to intellectually grasp the needs of the situation and the proper socialist analysis that is lacking, as much as it is a lack of contact, communication, and commitment. It is a psychological failure to be involved. It is the same alienation that affects all young people when they tackle an overwhelming job. Perhaps most of all, it is a failure of solidarity, a failure to create a sense that many thousands of young people are working together for the same objectives across Canada. Instead of the thrill of achievement what comes at an election victory or a mass demonstration, the movement has been permeated in many areas with a frustrated, factional, isola-

tionist spirit that permits of only the most limited objectives.

To fall at the end into cliches myself, it is a failure to dare greatly, as SUPA and SNCC are daring. It is a failure to do things otherwise than through the proper channels and in the accepted ways. It is a lack of faith that, the old gods having died, we can find new ones. It is a belief that Berkeley could not happen here, that confused young members cannot change and learn, that the NDP is no different than the CCF, that the new generation will not really do anything unpredictable. It is a failure of nerve that was typical of the fifties, and is now entirely out of place.

It remains to find new, practical programs and projects to allow new potentialities to take concrete shape. We are all "called" to this task. Not only the so-called Left Caucus, but all the delegates at the Convention will be called upon to create a " serious political alternative to the present program" and elect a "leadership pledged to carry out a vigorous program of education and action". Let us do so together.

# A REPLY TO MR. DAY

By BRIAN SLOCOCK

We were most pleased to receive Mr. Day's comments on the Left Caucus Convention Call. We have a firm belief that ideas are enriched,. and people gain a clear understanding of their essence, only through the process of debate and interchange of opinions. For that reason we have printed Mr. Day's criticisms, and are here attempting to reply to the observations he makes.

The first difference with Mr. Day arises over his regret, in the very first paragraph, that we have published a Call "defective in many ways". While I do not, in general, agree with Mr. Day's criticisms of the Call, I would be the last to deny that both defects and deficiencies are present in the Call. But, despite these, the Call will play a very vital role at the coming convention. In fact, even if all of Mr. Day's objections were valid, I would still not share his opinion that the publication of this document was "unfortunate". The fact that Mr. Day has chosen to reply to our statement is evidence that we have succeeded in sparking some debate within the NDY on the issues which are of vital importance to our movement - and this serves as justification enough for the Call, despite any "deficiencies" present...But now to deal with Mr. Day's specific criticisms.

Mr. Day first accuses us of "empty talk about the capitalist system" in an "out of date manner", despite our emphasis "on the freedom struggle and

the student revolution". In actual fact our "empty talk" about the capitalist system stems directly from our references to the freedom struggle and the student revolution. We have attempted to indicate that the problems giving riseto these movements, far from being isolated social phenomena, arise from a particular economic system. The origins of these problems must be sought in the nature of that system, the solutions must be reached through the changing of that system. We pointed out that the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system prevented it from dealing effectively with the problem of automation - one of the basic problems of Canadian youth. We then went on to draw the conclusion that any real solution to this problem (and, as the Call illustrates elsewhere, the problems of youth in general) lies in replacing the present system - lies in the establishment of socialism.

To label this "empty talk" is to deny our theses - is to argue that the capitalist system can solve the basic problems present within it, that it is a viable economic system, and that therefore an answer to our problems can be found within the context of this system. If Mr. Day wishes to undertake the defence of the capitalist system, he is welcome to do so.

## NATIONALIZATION

The second point he tries to score on us - namely that the demand for nationalization "has no appeal for the new generation" - also betrays a distinct tendency toward seeking solutions within the present system. Certainly the argument that this demand has "no appeal" for young people is irrelevant. Election results would seem to indicate that the program of the NDP has little "appeal" to the Canadian people as a whole. But is this any argument for dropping our program? It is only to the most blatant opportunists, who seek political power for its own sake - a meaningless power based on the ignorance of the electorate, rather than real

power based upon a politically conscious and informed populace. However I am sure Mr. Day does not mean to be opportunistic.

If nationalization has no appeal to the young people today, then it is our task to educate them, to show them how nationalization of industry is basic to the solution of their problems - provided we consider it as such a solution. But since Mr. Day feels that nationalization is not a relevant issue, and assuming that his objections are not based on opportunism, it must be that he rejects this as a basis for a solution to the economic problems we face. But surely such a policy - of mass nationalization - is basic to the task of changing the system? The present economic and social system has as its foundation private ownership of the productive forces, manifesting itself in the profit system. To change this system we must change the basis of ownership. In this modern age of huge corporations and highly developed scientific technology only one agency can possibly serve as the means for administrating this change in the forms of ownership - the state. The means for accomplishing this is nationalization. Thus these two concepts - changing the system, and mass nationalization - are evidently interdependent. To reject one, means to reject the other, Apparently Mr. Day rejects nationalization.

This belief is further reinforced by his ensuing comments. He points out that state ownership of the economy, where it has been put into practice, has not solved the problems of alienation and restriction that young people face. This seems to be Mr.Day's reason for the rejection of nationalization. However here Mr. Day becomes guilty of the very sin of which he accuses us - shallow social analysis. He states that state ownership of industry has not acted as a panacea for all the ills of society - therefore he rejects it. If Mr. Day is looking for total and all encompassing solutions, then nationalization is certainly not one of them. Nor will he find such solutions in the Left Caucus Call - for, unfortunately, such solu-

tions do not exist. All that we can attempt to do is to examine the root cause of a particu ar problem, attempt to formulate a solution which goes to this root, and apply and develop this solution as we go along.

It is our contention that the problems facing Canadian youth have their roots in the nature of the present economic system. Therefore any solution to these problems must take its starting point from changing the fundamental nature of this system. We have already outlined the role nationalization must play in any effort to change our system. The essence of Mr. Day's shallow social analysis lies in the fact that he has performed no analysis at all of the failures of state ownership to solve certain problems. He sees, and to a large extent correctly, that they are unsolved, and then seems to ascribe them to a fundamental characteristic of state ownership. He does not seem to entertain the possibility that they might be the product of <u>particular</u> forms of state ownership, developing according to <u>particular</u> policies, and in <u>particular</u> historical and material contexts. The possibility that these weaknesses might be remedied doesn't seem to concern him.

Certainly historical experience has taught us of the great importance of increasing the participation of the mass of the population in the political processes, and of the producers in the operation of their enterprises -(the demand for Workers Control), if the alienation experienced under capitalism is to be abated. I would say that the previous experiences of state ownership indicate that it is not the whole answer, that this solution needs <u>development</u> ( and of course the demand for Workers Control fills part of this need for development), but not, as Mr. Day feels, that the solution is entirely a false one. The solution is not complete, but it is the starting point for a real solution.

THE NEW LEFT

Next Mr. Day takes us to task for not basing ourselves on the "new left". Our document was composed in the traditions of the "old left". But that is where the kernel of the whole problem lies. We have a tradition. The development of the "new left" was a reaction to a general lack of ideas posing radical confrontations with the present form of society. The particular form it took was a result of the lack of radical and socialist traditions upon which it could base the radical criticisms it shaped. It is thus natural that it should have originated primarily in the American academic community, where such traditions are almost totally lacking, and in Great Britain, where real ideological traditions are not widespread. A significant fact is the absence of any mainstream of new-leftism in European radical-academic circles, which the existence of mass Communist and socialist parties has imbued with a long standing tradition of Marxism, and radical critique in general of the existing system.

New leftism and its sociologically oriented terminology is neither good nor bad in itself. It has certainly made many important contributions to radical literature, and has performed many valuable analyses and critiques of our present society. However, it is not how it is said, but what is said that is of real importance. The fact that the members of the Left Caucus, inheriting the radical traditions of the CCF, and, for many of us, of the socialist movement as a whole, have chosen a different terminology for our presentation, cannot really be entertained as a serious criticism.

To say, as Mr. Day does, that the ideas we have expressed have "lost all relevance" for radical youth is to express the opinion that a fundamental change has been effected in society which has made

these ideas - ideas moulded in the historical struggles of the socialist movement for a new and better society - inapplicable to the present form of society. But no such change has taken place. The society we are now confronting is fundamentally the same type of society in response to which the formulations of the "traditional" left were made. Certainly we are faced with new problems within society; certainly these new problems require new answers. But these new problems are merely new manifestations, expressions of the constant change and development that is gradually going on within our society, of the old fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system. The new answers must be found through continual reformulation, development and enrichment of the traditional theories and program - not by their rejection.

The fundamental change which Mr. Day would seem to believe has invalidated our ideas has yet to come - and only a "conventional socialist program" developed and expanded to meet the new situations, can effect this change. The modern manifestations of radical youth, far from being "grafted on" to a "conventional socialist program" are simply a response to the situations created by the fundamental contradictions of our present form of society, and require such a program to provide real answers, which these youth need if they are to solve these problems.

The statement that our "social analysis is shallow" probably has some basis, although not in the manner Mr. Day suggest. This document was simply a brief presentation of our ideas, presented in an effort to rally NDYers for the tasks outlined in the Call. As such it did not go into detailed analysis, and most probably was guilty, although this was largely unavoidable because of the nature of the document, of some deficiencies. This Call must be examined in conjunction with the other documents which the Caucus will produce, the articles which will present more detailed analysis in support of our theses (one of which Mr. Day refers

you to), and the presentation of our ideas by the Caucus at the convention. We certainly could not undertake a complete depth-analysis of the NDY, the radicalism of Canadian Youth, and the capitalist system, in a document of this form and length.

Mr. Day accuses us of failing to provide a radical analysis of the situation of students and working youth in their new context. I think that our expression of the interrelation between the situation and problems of today's youth, and the basic nature of the present system provides the basis for such an analysis. The references of Mr. Day's to a "new generation, aware of the world as never before, open-minded, yet atomized, barely able to conceive of collective action because they lack group identification" seems like a rather involved way of stating the simple fact that today's youth have reached a new, higher, level of consciousness than ever before, but are lacking in leadership. Certainly that is one of the central themes of our document. If our terminology prevented Mr. Day from realizing this, then perhaps we should apologize.

He also states that we do not suggest "how we can proceed from the present tendency of 'phony radicalism' - attacking injustice somewhere else - to a challenge of the Canadian power structure", that we call "for more militant resolutions rather than for the conquest of our own environment". The primary reason for the present "phony radicalism" Mr. Day outlines is the failure to understand the connection between the glaring atrocities committed in our society - Vietnam, the Congo, Alabama - and the far less well-publicized, subtler, forms of oppression that continuously surround us. It is essential that people be made aware of the injustice in their own countries, and the basic relation between that injustice and the more critical international problems - that both problems be related to the nature of

the system. This is what we have done in the call. Certainly this is the only way to develop " phony radicalism" into genuine social and political consciousness.

When Mr. Day accuses us of calling for more militant resolutions, rather than attacking the problems of our environment, he sets up a very false division between theory and practice. We have called for more militant resolutions, for more militant and radical policy - in general, for a radical and militant ideology - in the belief that consistent action must be based on consistent ideas - on a comprehensive ideology. Before we can build a radical youth movement - the necessary means for the "conquest of our environment" - we must begin the creation of its ideological foundations.

Mr. Day's next point is our lack of "an ideology flexible and radical enough to apply to new situations". In fact our ideology is quite radical and flexible - in the sense that it is always prepared to recognize the existence of new situations, and adapt to meet their challenge. However, these new situations are not of a fundamental nature - the essence of the social system from which they stem is the same - and therefore the essence of our ideology must remain the same.

Mr. Day then gives us a series of quotes from an SDS document, outlining the principles of a "participatory Democracy". These quotations, taken out of context, are not entirely representative of the analyses of SDS. SDS has frequently, just as we have done in this document, posed the necessity of going beyond the present system to find the necessary solutions - of changing the present system. However these particular exerpts do not pose the problems and solutions in a sufficiently clear manner. They do not call for the changing of the system, explicitly, and give little specific content to their terms. Such phrases

as " an acceptable pattern of social relations", "democratic participation" in, and "democratic social regulation of", the economy have little real meaning unless they are clearly defined and elaborated upon. But if elaboration gives these terms a social content that is satisfactory to the tasks they are designed to fill, then it is because the social content poses replacement of the present system. If that is the case, then the difference between SDS's demands, and ours, becomes largely one of terminology. Surely semantics are a poor basis for political criticism.

Mr. Day then cites our failure as that of failing "to go back to the basic relationship between freedom and democracy, which underlay traditional socialism and which underlies equally the New Left in its attempt to lead people to solve their own problems by revitalizing democracy". Mr. Day has just finished criticizing our "traditionalism" and now goes on to criticize us for failing to go back to some supposed wellspring of traditional socialism which, moreover, is the foundation of the "new leftism" he has just finished counterposing to our "traditionalism". This seems somewhat contradictory.

The term "basic relationship between freedom and democracy" is extremely vague, but by it, I assume, Mr. Day means that the real goal of a consistently democratic ideology is to provide for the completely free development of the individual. With this I would have no disagreement. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries this free development was held to be dependent upon the free operation of the market economy. The root of this ideology was the newly arising bourgeois class, which, as a result of the French and American revolutions, and a series of violent struggles and constitutional reforms in Britain, were in the ascendency on the political horizon. This was the ideology of liberal democracy.

However the further development of the capitalist system, with its inevitable concentration of economic power, destroyed the "free market" economy, replacing it with monopolistic control. In the political arena this was reflected by the conversion of the "democratic system" from one that provided for the free development of man, into one that was an obstacle to that development. Historical development had rendered the old concepts of democracy inadequate to fill their declared aim. These concepts had to be replaced by new ones, if the road to this desired goal was to be created. It was socialism which provided these new concepts and the road required. It did so by challenging the very basis of the capitalist system, and demanding its replacement by a new one based upon the common ownership of the means of production - exactly what we have done in the Left Caucus call.

Certainly any talk of "revitalizing democracy" is simple anachronistic utopianism - a complete failure to realize that historical development of the economic system has undercut the possibility of reviving the old potentialities within the context of that system - unless the actual social content of the term "revitalizing democracy" is that of effecting a basic change in the present system. But if that is its meaning, then why not call it by its proper name - Socialism.

## THE NEED FOR A SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP

Then Mr. Day explains that we have "misunderstood the present problems facing the NDY"and that we have posed only "the most theoritical of solutions". An example is cited of one signer of the call who knows of no example of an NDY leader that fits our characterization of them, and we are told that the present leadership "acted in good faith".

It is true that the bulk of our criticisms were of a theoretical nature. That is because we felt that the present crisis in the Federal NDY was not

simply a result of organizational mistakes, but had deep-going political causes. That is to say, that the problem was in large measure one of theory - theory of the role of a youth movement, of the solutions to the problems of our society, etc. - and that, therefore, the solution to this crisis lay in the re-examination of the theory prevalent among our leadership, and the posing of alternative theories. We did not ignore the practical side of organisation. Several concrete proposals were presented in the Call, and these have been elaborated on in a draft document printed in this current edition.

The statement of the signer of the Call referred to by Mr. Day, who denied knowing of any executive members who see the NDY as"a breeding ground for future parliamentarians", an"election machine" is understandable. It was a weakness of thd Call that this characterization of the leadership was presented in a rather crude manner. Essentially it is valid, but its manner of presentation easily gave rise to misinterpretation, by presenting this political failing of the current leadership in a simplistic manner, as that of their conscious,subjective beliefs.

That is not at all our contention. What we were attempting to do was to characterize the basic concept of the role of the Youth held by the current leadership. This we did in a substantially correct form. The political concept we outlined is the one which underlies all the actions of the present leadership, and is the primary reason, a political, theoretical reason for the stagnation of the NDY.

Of course the present leadership acted in good faith - in accordance with their beliefs. That is why we need such a sweeping change. If they acted in good faith, but failed in the tasks confronting them, then the fault must lie with their "faith". Thus we need a new leadership, with a new "faith".

If the failures of the NDY could be ascribed to the " bad faith " of the leadership then we would only have to raise the demand for a <u>new</u> leadership. As it is we must raise the demand for a leadership with a <u>new ideology</u> - for a <u>socialist</u> leadership.

Mr. Day then tries to defend the present leadership against our implied charge that they are not socialists. I have no doubt that the present leadership all consider themselves socialists, and would react most indignantly to any suggestion they weren't. So to clarify the issue let us define our terms.

A socialist is a person who, realizing that our present society is full of basic contradictions, rejects the present system, and seeks solution to the problems of our society through the creation of a new form of society. Believing in the unity of theory and practice, he attempts to apply his theories through political action. He is a sincere dedicated person intimately involved in the social struggles going on around him. There is one thing that takes precedence over all others in his life- furthering the cause of socialism.

With this definition at hand, we cannot but deny the request of the present leadership for admittance to the category of socialists. Mr. Day furnishes the evidence for our denial.

His description of the present leadership - their integration into middle-class families and environments, five to seven thousand dollar a year jobs, their isolation from the membership, and from the struggles of Canadian youth; in general, their isolation from the harsh realities of the system - this presents us with a perfect portrait of a group of " armchair socialists ". How can we expect them to be dedicated and intimately involved in the cause of socialism, when that cause is only a supplement to their families and jobs? How can we expect them to pose the necessity of changing the-

system, to even understand the necessity of changing it, when they seem to be completely integrated into it, and well insulated from its crude realities. They have no real stake in the cause of socialism; it is entirely an academic affair with them. They are to be commended for having chosen to try and do some good with their spare time, but we must recognise the fact that their relationship to the present system, politics, and socialism, prevents them from being the kind of dedicated, committed radical leadership we need - a <u>socialist</u> leadership.

We must build the NDY into the type of movement Paul Potter, President of SDS, called for at the March on Washington - a movement of"people who are willing to change their lives, who are willing to challenge the system, to take the problem of change seriously". The present leadership was not capable of rising to this task -- only a socialist leadership can achieve it. The present leadership is not to be blamed for its inability to achieve this - they are but products of their environment.

In closing Mr. Day states that not only the Left Caucus, but all delegates "will be called upon to create ' a serious political alternative to the present program' and elect a 'leadership pledged to carry out a vigorous program of education and action'". This is certainly true - our Call was addressed to all delegates, to all members. Again we reiterate our call, along with Mr. Day. We must build a movement which will fill the need which Paul Potter outlined at the March on Washington when he said,"We must name that system. We must name it, describe it, analyze it, understand it and change it. For it is only when that system is changed and brought under control that there can be any hope for stopping the forces that create a war in Vietnamtoday or a murder in the South tomorrow or all the incalculable, innumerable more subtle atrocities that are worked on people all over - all the time". " achievement of this aim

requires the adoption of a socialist program and the election of a socialist leadership. We invite all delegates to join us in the construction of a Left Caucus at the convention to work for these aims.

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SOCIALISM (so'shel-iz'm), n (cf. Fr. socialisme), 1. the theory or system of the ownership of the means of production and distribution by society or the community rather than by private individuals, with all members of society or the community sharing in the work and the products.

-Webster's New World Dictionary

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Three articles from **IDENTITY**

A JOURNAL FOR POLITICAL DISCUSSION WITHIN THE NEW DEMOCRATIC YOUTH.

- Left Caucus Convention Call (June /65)
- Comments on the Left Caucus Convention Call
  By Wilf Day
- A Reply to Mr. Day
  By Brian Slocock

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